

Message Text

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E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: PEPR, SOPN

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT CARTER'S REMARKS ON SALT

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1. IN RESPONSE TO A JUNE 2 WASHINGTON POST HEADLINE
STORY BEARING TITLE "WHITE HOUSE IMPOSING FREEZE ON
STRATEGIC ARMS TALKS", THE PRESIDENT MADE THE
FOLLOWING REMARKS IN THE OVAL OFFICE AT 0945 EDT JUNE 2:

2. QUOTE. THE PRESIDENT. I UNDERSTAND THAT ON OCCASION
THERE WILL BE INADVERTENT INACCURACIES IN REPORTING OF
NEWS AND THIS IS PART OF OUR SYSTEM THAT I DON'T CONDEMN.
I LIVE WITH IT. BUT THIS MORNING THERE WAS AN EXAMPLE THAT
I THINK IS SERIOUS ENOUGH TO WARRANT A DIRECT APPEARANCE
BEFORE YOU BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES. THIS
STORY IN THE WASHINGTON POST, "WHITE HOUSE IMPOSES FREEZE
ON STRATEGIC ARMS TALKS" IS TOTALLY INACCURATE.

- AND BEFORE THE STORY WAS PUBLISHED, THE REPORTERS WERE
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INFORMED THAT THE STORY WAS TOTALLY INACCURATE. THE
EDITORS DECIDED TO GO AHEAD WITH IT ANYHOW. IT DAMAGES
OUR COUNTRY, IT DAMAGES MY CREDIBILITY, AND I THINK IT
DAMAGES THE PROSPECT FOR CONTINUATION OF THE BASIC POLICY
OF OUR GOVERNMENT, WHICH HAS NOT CHANGED SINCE I CAME IN

OFFICE; THAT IS, TO PROCEED AGGRESSIVELY WITH SALT DIS-

CUSSIONS, TO CONCLUDE A TREATY AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE AND WITHOUT DELAY BECAUSE OF POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS, AND TO MAKE SURE THAT THAT TREATY, WHEN CONCLUDED, IS IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF OUR COUNTRY.

- THIS MATTER HAS NEVER BEEN DISCUSSED, EVEN INFORMALLY AMONG THE THREE PEOPLE IN OUR GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBLE FOR SALT DISCUSSIONS, PAUL WARNKE, THE HEAD OF ACDA, SECRETARY OF STATE CYRUS VANCE, OR MYSELF. WE HAVE NEVER EVEN DISCUSSED IT AND I WANT TO MAKE IT CLEAR ON THE RECORD THAT THIS STORY IS INACCURATE, THAT OUR POLICY IS UNCHANGED AND THIS IS THE STATEMENT I WANTED TO MAKE TO YOU.

- QUESTION: IS IT POSSIBLE SOMEONE IS TRYING TO TORPEDO THAT NEGOTIATION?

- THE PRESIDENT: JODY WILL RESPOND IN DEPTH IN JUST A FEW MINUTES TO ANY OF YOUR QUESTIONS.

- QUESTION: CAN YOU TELL US ANY ABOUT YOUR TALKS WITH GROMYKO, WERE THERE ANY HOPEFUL PROSPECTS?

- THE PRESIDENT: JODY CAN ANSWER THAT. END OF QUOTE. CHRISTOPHER

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